



ADMINISTRATIVE NOTES



Superintendent
of Documents

Stop SLLC

LIBRARY PROGRAMS SERVICE

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An Open Letter From the Public Printer

Dear Depository Librarian:

I know of your concerns about the disruption of depository microfiche deliveries over the past year, and I can appreciate the difficulties that this unfortunate situation is causing in your library. My purpose in writing you today is to provide some background on the situation and to reassure you that we are making excellent progress toward resuming normal microfiche deliveries to depositories.

Since the introduction of microfiche format in the Depository Library program about 10 years ago, most GPO source document microfiche conversion for depository distribution had been performed under a single-award two-year contract, known as B154-S. In March 1987, Library Programs Service (LPS) began discovering significant defects with the silver and diazo microfiche delivered by the contractor for B154-S, resulting in the rejection of numerous orders. Moreover, the contractor was unable to keep pace with the number of corrections required to replace the defective microfiche, in addition to the ongoing routine work. The contractor's performance continued to deteriorate, and GPO's attempts to work with him in solving these problems failed. In August 1987, the contractor was terminated and GPO was left with 1800 pending orders representing approximately 4,000 to 5,000 publications.

Normally following a contract termination, the rejected work would be reprocured from another source and service would continue with minimal disruption. However, in this case the B154-S contractor protested the termination, and the rejected work was embargoed pending resolution of the protest, thus prohibiting GPO from reprocuring the rejected work. Finally, in March 1988, the GPO was allowed to commence reprourement of the rejected work.

The demise of B154-S raised several issues, the resolution of which were necessary to stabilize the microfiche conversion program. With the bulk of microfiche conversion being performed under a single contract, if the contractor failed to perform

adequately, the entire microfiche conversion program was in jeopardy, owing to GPO's historically having "all of its eggs in one basket." Therefore, GPO developed a decentralized contracting strategy, which now distributes our microfiche conversion requirements among eight separate, smaller contracts. While the multiple contracts significantly increase GPO's procurement and contract administration burden, the depository library microfiche program is no longer at the mercy of a single large contract.

Additionally, this multiple approach affords us the latitude to allocate specific types of publications to particular contracts, along with the flexibility to vary delivery schedules among different contracts. Whereas under the previous single contract, there was a standard delivery period for all publications, we are now able to build in tighter delivery schedules for certain high priority publications.

The net result of GPO's efforts will ultimately be to put the depository microfiche conversion program on a more solid contracting foundation. However, the short term effect has been to delay the award of source document conversion contracts during fiscal year 1988, resulting in another backlog to be converted. This backlog, as of mid-June, 1988 involves 10,000 publications awaiting source document conversion to microfiche, as well as approximately 5,000 agency-supplied silver reproducible microfiche awaiting duplication. Contracts for this work were solicited during the first half of calendar year 1988. The status of each as of August 24, 1988 is described in the appendix.

Thus, we are in the process of working our way out from under two separate backlogs: one composed of the original contractor's rejected material and the other resulting from Federal procurement procedural delays in awarding the multiple microfiche contracts.

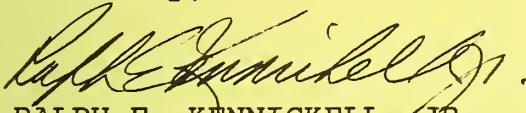
In addition to decentralizing our microfiche requirements into multiple contracts, LPS has also recently reorganized its Micrographics Section in an effort to reinforce the depository microfiche operation. We have upgraded the position of Chief, Micrographics Section, created positions for two subordinate supervisors, and subsumed the micrographics receiving function within the Micrographics Section. Our aim was to centralize all LPS micrographics-related responsibilities under a single Micrographics Section Chief, who would be allowed the time to continuously monitor the new contracts. Thereby, we have both simplified and strengthened managerial controls over the micrographics operation.

As I stated previously, we are making excellent progress toward resuming normal microfiche deliveries to depositories. Presently, seven of the eight authorized microfiche contracts have been awarded. You should be seeing a sizeable increase in microfiche receipts at your library in September and, barring any further unforeseen obstacles, the full resumption of microfiche deliveries in October 1988.

I want to assure you that everything possible is being done within GPO to resolve the microfiche contracting situation as quickly as possible. It is important to understand, however, that throughout this year-long ordeal GPO has been beset by a series of delaying factors over which we have had little or no control. Embedded in the Federal procurement regulations are requirements and safeguards intended to ensure the integrity of the process, but which also serve to greatly protract the process. Nevertheless, as difficult as the past year has been for all of us, the lessons learned are helping us to strengthen the microfiche program for the future.

Thank you for your patience and forbearance over the past year. I look forward with you to the resumption of normal microfiche deliveries very soon.

Sincerely,



RALPH E. KENNICKELL, JR.
Public Printer

APPENDIX

August 24, 1988

Depository Microfiche Contracts: Status Report

- B613S - CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS MICROFICHE - SOURCE DOCUMENTS
Term: June 23, 1988 - November 30, 1988
Status: Awarded June 23, 1988.
- B456S - MICROFICHE PRODUCED FROM GOVERNMENT-FURNISHED MICROFICHE
Term: May 9, 1988 - February 28, 1989
Status: "On hold" by reason of protest.
- B513S - MONTHLY CATALOG MICROFICHE
Term: May 23, 1988 - February 28, 1989
Status: Awarded May 23, 1988.
- B486S - CONGRESSIONAL (Bound) RECORD MICROFICHE
Status: "On hold" by direction of JCP.
- B532S - MICROFICHE OF COMMITTEE PRINTS AND HEARINGS
Term: August 9, 1988 - February 28, 1989
Status: Awarded August 9, 1988.
- B562S - MICROFICHE OF CONGRESSIONAL REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS
Term: August 10, 1988 - April 30, 1989
Status: Awarded August 10, 1988.
- B568S - CIJE, SEC DOCKETS MICROFICHE
Term: August 16, 1988 - March 31, 1989
Status: Awarded August 16, 1988.
- B354S - MICROFICHE OF MISCELLANEOUS PUBLICATIONS
Term: June 15, 1988 - April 30, 1989
Status: Awarded June 15, 1988.
- B551S - REPROCUREMENT MICROFICHE
Term: July 11, 1988 - November 30, 1988
Status: Awarded July 11, 1988